



Spill Info.

What to do when mercury is spilled

It is recommended that a professional emergency response contractor clean up a mercury spill. But if the spill is minor, school staff trained in hazardous materials spill cleanups can take on the cleanup responsibilities.

Spill Response Action Steps:

1. Evacuate the spill area. Leave all shoes, clothing and other articles that were splashed with mercury at the spill area.
2. Wash skin exposed to mercury with soap and water.
3. Immediately open the room's outside windows and exterior doors to provide ventilation.
4. Seal off the room from the rest of the building by closing all interior doors and windows. Close all cold-air returns so that mercury vapor is not carried throughout the school.
5. Lower the temperature of the room by turning off the heat to the room. The ventilation and cooling systems to the spill area should be turned off. If possible, all air ducts to the room should be sealed temporarily.
6. Turn off fans unless they vent to the outdoors. Use portable fans to blow mercury-contaminated air outdoors.
7. If someone has inhaled mercury vapor or ingested mercury, call a poison control center (800) 222-1222.
8. Report the mercury spill to your state environmental duty officer.
9. Hire a professional emergency response contractor or make sure that a trained staff person takes responsibility for cleaning up the mercury spill.
10. After cleanup is completed, temporarily (for a few days) elevate the room temperature to 80 to 90 degrees F. Continue to ventilate the spill area for at least two days before reoccupying it. Direct all ventilation outside if possible.
11. Monitor the spill area to ensure that mercury vapor levels meet the proper Health Department criteria. This is done with a mercury vapor analyzer or collecting air samples for analysis at a laboratory.
12. Properly recycle all mercury waste or dispose of it as hazardous waste.

24 Hour Emergency Contacts for Spills

Iowa:	(515) 281-8694
Kansas:	(785) 296-1679
Missouri:	(573) 634-2436
Nebraska:	(402) 326-0231
EPA:	(913) 281-0991

NOTE: If you believe a child's life is in danger because of exposure to mercury, please call the National Poison Center at (800) 222-1222.